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**TAXONOMICAL PROBLEMS AND ZOOGEOGRAPHICAL
INVESTIGATION OF THE STONEFLY (PLECOPTERA) FAUNA OF
THE CARPATHIAN BASIN AND THE BALKANS**

PhD Theses



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INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

At the beginning of the third millennium, there were 135 species known from the Carpathian Basin and 188 from the Balkans. The faunistic exploration of the Carpathian Basin, contrary to other parts of Europe, should be regarded as moderate while the Balkans are rather poorly known. Furthermore, knowledge on each country is variable within the regions. For example, the stonefly fauna of Romania is one of the best known in Europe, due to the activity of Béla Kis. On the other hand, the Albanian fauna was nearly unknown before the beginning of my researches.

Besides the deficiencies of faunistic exploration, there are many taxonomical problems regarding to the stoneflies of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans: quite many species known only from one gender, larvae are unknown or only deficiently known in most of the species, and the validity of some taxa should be questioned.

Both of the areas are rich in endemic species and their geographical borders can be drawn quite explicitly. Even so, the relationship of the stonefly fauna with the neighbouring regions, and relation of the fauna of well separated mountain systems and drainages of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans were investigated only as a supplement of faunistic or taxonomical works, especially in the case of the Balkans.

In the light of the above, my aims were as follows:

Faunistics: Further exploration of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans, especially in the hardly investigated areas and the border zones.

Taxonomy: To review the taxonomical problems of the species known from the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans, solve these as far as possible, and to describe the new species turned up during the faunistic explorations.

Zoogeography: To characterize the zoogeographical aspects of the stonefly fauna of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans, and to describe their relations.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Specimens were collected using aquatic net, sweeping net, singling and biting at about 700 watercourses of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans, in an early spring, spring, early summer and autumnal data, as far as possible. 3500 lots were collected by 1996, specimens

are stored in 70% ethanol and deposited in the Collection of Smaller Insect Orders, Department of Zoology, Hungarian Natural History Museum. Besides my own material, I worked up or revised the additional 1500 lots of Carpathian Basin and Balkan stonefly material stored in the Hungarian Natural History Museum. Comparative material was borrowed or got as a gift from the following collections: Zoological Museum of Lausanne, Limnologischen Fluss-station des Max-Planck-Instituts für Limnologie, Slovenian Museum of Natural History, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Wien and Gilles Vinçon Collection, Grenoble.

Specimens were examined with binocular in 70% ethanol, when necessary, terminalia were cleared by boiling in 10% KOH for 5–10 minutes. Genital organs were mounted on slides in CMC-9AF liquid or in glycerin gelatine. Drawings were prepared using a camera lucida on binocular and biological microscopes, or the source is indicated in the text. SEM photos were made on Hitachi S-2600N scanning electron microscope, using golden-palladium coating after critical point drying. Maps were made by DIVA–GIS 5.4.0.1. program or after original drafts, multivariant analyses were made by SynTax 2000.

Faunistical data enumerated according to the regions used in the zoogeographical examinations. Literature data discussed on the basis of regional checklists and reviews signed in the Literature overview chapter of the thesis, sources indicated only when it is not included in those works. Data new for a region or a country signed after the list of synonymies. In the case of already published descriptions of new species, redescrptions or new larval descriptions, I included only the diagnoses and the affinities, the detailed descriptions can be found in the articles published. Descriptions, redescrptions and larval descriptions follow the actual methods, the examined morphological characters discussed in the methodological chapter of the thesis.

Zoogeographical observations were taken on the basis of my own faunistical results and the literature data. Proceeding from the divisions summarized in the Literature overview chapter of the thesis, I use the following division of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans that is based on distributional patterns traced out by literatuer data and my own collectings: Carpathian Basin: Foothils of the Alps, Western Carpathians, Northern Carpathians, Hungarian low mountains, Eastern Carpathians, Transsylvanian Mountains, Southern Transdanubia, Fruška Gora and Southern Carpathians region; Balkans: Slavonia, Dinaric Mountains, Balkan Mountains, Western-Central Balkans, Eastern-Central Balkans, Eastern Balkans, Tekir Mountains, Pindos Mountains, Southern-Central Balkans and Parnassus region, Ionic Isles, Éuboa, Pelopponnes, Aegean Isles and Crete. Details of this division, the

enumeration of the hills and mountains included in each regions can be found in Appendix 1. Besides the units with endemic species, I dealt with some data deficient but geographically well separated regions as independent regions. The division includes only ranges above 300 meters.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

- I augmented the collection of the Hungarian Natural History Museum with 3500 identified lots, and I identified or revised the already existed material.
- I found 1 species new to the fauna of Ukraine, 1 for the fauna of Romania, 4 for the fauna of Hungary, 13 for the fauna of Croatia, 4 for the fauna of Serbia, 3 for the fauna of Montenegro, 3 for the fauna of Serbia-Kosovo, 1 for the fauna of Bulgaria, 1 for the fauna of Macedonia, 34 for the fauna of Albania, 13 for the fauna of Greece and 5 for the fauna of Turkey.
- 78 occurrences are new for the regions used in the faunistical division of the area.
- With the new records including also the species described the number of stonefly species known from the Carpathian Basin increased from 135 to 138, and the species known from the Balkans increased from 189 to 197.
- I described eight species and one subspecies new to science (*Leuctra pseudonigra* sp. n., *L. mortoni feheri* Murányi, 2007, *L. dalmoni* Vinçon & Murányi, 2007, *L. cornuata* sp. n., *L. malcor* Murányi, 2007, *Nemoura asceta* Murányi, 2007, *N. shqiperica* sp. n., *N. vinconi* Murányi, 2007, *N. anas* Murányi, 2007) and two hitherto unknown larvae (*Brachyptera phthiotica* Berthélemy, 1971, *Protonemura albanica* Raušer, 1963).
- I made redescriptions on three (*Leuctra prima* Kempny, 1899, *L. pseudosignifera* Aubert, 1954, *Nemoura peristeri* Aubert, 1963), complementary descriptions on four species (*Leuctra metsovonica* Aubert, 1956, *Perlodes intricatus* (Pictet, 1841), *Siphonoperla graeca* (Aubert, 1956), *Chloroperla zhiltzovae* Zwick, 1967).
- I defined three new species groups (*Nemoura brevipennis*, *N. fusca*, *N. peristeri* fajcsoport), furthermore a new status (*Siphonoperla graeca* (Aubert, 1956)) and a nomen dubium were proposed (*Leuctra kisi* Steinmann, 1968).
- I named the borders of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans on the basis of the stonefly fauna, and divided these areae into regions.

- I analysed the relations of the regions, and the relations with the neighbouring units of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans on the basis of their fauna. I stated that the higher parts of the Carpathian Basin, the Northern and Central Balkans, and the Southern Balkans are well separated.
- On the basis of the distribution of the endemics, I detected well delimited focus areas in the case of the Balkans: an illyrian, a moesian and an attican one.

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